GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2271
ANSWERED ON:14.03.2007
AMENDMENT OF MARITIME SHIPPING ACT
Rao Shri Kavuru Samba Siva

Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposes to formulate a new policy by amending the existing Maritime Shipping Act to encourage the entry of foreign cruises;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the number of cruise passenger landings at Indian ports each year during the last three years; and

(d) the steps taken by the Government to boost cruise passenger tourism in the country?

Answer

MINISTER OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI T.R. BAALU)

(a) & (b): A cruise shipping policy to promote tourism is on the anvil. However, the policy does not involve amendment of the existing Merchant Shipping Act 1958.

(c): The majority of cruise passengers arrive at Mumbai, Cochin and Goa. The cruise passengers landings at these three ports during 2003-04, 2004-05 and 2005-06 were 24,908, 21,824 and 50,705 respectively.

(d): Steps to boost cruise passenger tourism in the country along with measures to be taken are the following:-

(i) Cabotage has been relaxed for cruise ships for a period of 5 years from December, 2003.

(ii) Upto 50% rebate has been given in vessel related charges including berth hire, pilotage, etc.

(iii) Phased programme will be evolved for development of facilities at ports for cruise shipping.

(iv) Systems and procedure are being streamlined to facilitate seamless travel by the tourists.

(v) Cruise operator M/s. Ocean Cruises India Pvt. Ltd. has been permitted to operate cruise from Goa to Lakshadweep via Cochin. Similarly Cruise operator M/s. Star Cruises has been permitted to operate cruises from Mumbai to Lakshadweep (Kadmat Island) and Mumbai to Goa.